

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 116054

20

ORIGIN EA-13

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 116054

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: GOP REQUEST FOR USE OF VOA TRANSMITTERS

REFS: A. MANILA 5002, B. MANILA 6089, C. USIA 9486

FOR SULLIVAN FROM HUMMEL

1. DEPARTMENT AND USIA HAVE CONSULTED EXTENSIVELY ABOUT POSSIBLE GOP USE OF VOA TRANSMITTERS. WE ARE BOTH VERY CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBILITY THAT PHILIPPINES MIGHT WISH TO USE TRANSMITTERS FOR BROADCASTS TO US.

2. WHILE USIA'S CHARTER PROHIBITS USIA ACTIVITIES IN US, FILIPINO USE OF VOA TRANSMITTERS FOR BROADCASTS TO THE US AS SPECIFIED IN THE 1963 AGREEMENT WOULD BE LEGAL, IN OPINION OF STATE AND USIA LEGAL OFFICERS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 116054

3. SHOULD CONGRESS, HOWEVER, BECOME AWARE THAT VOA TRANS-

MITTERS WERE BEING USED BY MARCOS GOVERNMENT FOR SUCH BROADCASTS, WE ANTICIPATE HEAVY CRITICISM DESPITE LEGALITY OF GOP ACTION.

4. WE WOULD LIKE THEREFORE TO TURN OFF GOP REQUEST AS QUICKLY AND QUIETLY AS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, THIS WILL HAVE TO BE DONE WITH GREAT DELICACY SINCE (A) THE PHILS ARE COMPLETELY WITHIN THEIR RIGHTS IN MAKING THIS REQUEST, (B) VOA FACILITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES ARE DEPENDENT ON GOOD-WILL AND COOPERATION OF PHILIPPINE BUREAUCRACY FOR

THEIR DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS AND (C) VOA MIGHT WISH IN NEAR FUTURE TO INSTALL ADDITIONAL SHORT-WAVE TRANSMITTERS IN PHILIPPINES BECAUSE OF INABILITY TO CONTINUE OPERATIONS IN OKINAWA AFTER 1977. THUS WE MIGHT BE IN POSITION OF ASKING PHILIPPINES FOR MORE FAVORS FOR OUR VOA FACILITIES SOON WITH VERY LITTLE TO GIVE IN RETURN.

5. WE WOULD THEREFORE APPRECIATE ASAP YOUR ESTIMATE OF SERIOUSNESS OF GOP INTENT TO USE THE VOA FACILITIES AND IF INDEED THEY ARE PLANNING US BROADCASTS. WHO HAS INSPIRED REQUEST AND WHAT IS THE LEVEL AND EXTENT OF GOP SUPPORT FOR IT?

6. DO YOU THINK IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO TURN OFF THE REQUEST AND AT WHAT LEVEL SHOULD THIS BEST BE DONE?

7. WE FEEL THAT BEST ARGUMENTS TO USE WITH PHILS WOULD BE (A) BROADCASTING CONDITIONS FROM PHILIPPINES TO U.S. BETWEEN 0200-0400 GMT SO POOR THAT IT IS EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL BROADCASTS WOULD ATTAIN SATISFACTORY RECEPTION IN U.S. (B) LISTENERSHIP WOULD MOST LIKELY BE VERY SMALL, (C) PROBABLE ADVERSE CONGRESSIONAL REACTION TO BROADCASTS WHICH COULD AFFECT GOP AID LEVEL AND USIA FUNDING; (D) PHIL DISSIDENTS IN U.S. WOULD PROBABLY USE BROADCASTS AS AMMUNITION TO FURTHER THEIR OWN AIMS ON HILL, (E) GOP COULD BETTER REALIZE TRADE AND TOURIST PROMOTION OBJECTIVES IN U.S. BY BUYING TIME ON OUR LOCAL COMMERCIAL NETWORKS. IN SHORT, THAT WE SEE BROADCASTS BEING OF MARGINAL USE TO GOP BUT CARRYING POTENTIAL FOR CONSIDERABLE HARM TO BOTH

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PAGE 03 STATE 116054

GOVERNMENTS.

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